WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for reducing expansion of an infarct of a heart in a human patient having a pericardial sac comprising:

a. inserting a catheter into the pericardial sac of the patient, and

b. infusing fluid through the catheter into the pericardial space.

2. The method as in claim 1 further comprising monitoring pressure in the pericardium during infusion.

3. The method as in claim 1 further comprising adding or draining the fluid from pericardium to maintain a desired pericardial pressure value.

4. The method as in claim 1 further comprising inflating a balloon on a distal end of the catheter inside the pericardial space.

5. The method as in claim 1 wherein the patient has suffered an occlusion of a major coronary artery.

6. The method as in claim 1 wherein the infusion of fluid is continued for during a period of no greater than 14 days.

7. The method as in claim 1 wherein the infusion of fluid beings within twenty four hours after the time of infarction.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the infusion of fluid is continued for a period of at least 24 hours.

9. The method as in claim 1 wherein a fluid pressure in the pericardium is maintained at 0 to 10 mmHg.

10. The method as in claim 1 wherein the catheter is retained in the pericardial space by the balloon.

11. A method to constrain a heart of a mammalian patient, wherein the heart is in a pericardial, said method comprising:

a. inserting a distal section of a catheter into the pericardial sac;

b. infusing a fluid from the distal section and into the pericardial sac, and

c. increasing a fluid pressure in the pericardial sac.

12. A method as in claim 11 further comprising reducing the fluid pressure in the sac after a treatment period of at least one day and less than fourteen days.

13. A method as in claim 11 further comprising monitoring a pressure of the infused fluid; comparing the pressure of the infused fluid to a target pressure; draining fluid from the sac if the pressure is above the target pressure.

14. A method as in claim 11 wherein the infused fluid is supplied from a container elevated above the patient at a height of between 68 centimeters (cm) and 272 cm.

15. A system for infusing fluid into a pericardial sac of a mammalian patient comprising:

a catheter having a distal section adapted to be inserted into the pericardial sac of the patient;

a supply of infusing fluid connectable to the catheter, wherein said fluid is infused into the pericardial sac, and

a pericardial pressure monitor connectable to said catheter and generating a signal indicative of a fluid pressure of at least one of the infusing fluid and a fluid pressure in the pericardial sac.

16. A system as in claim 15 further comprising a controller connectable to at least one of said catheter and supply of infusing fluid, wherein said controller regulates an amount of fluid infused into the pericardial sac based on the signal indicative of fluid pressure in the sac.

17. A system as in claim 15 wherein the controller is a pump controller and further comprising a pump connectable to a supply line connected to a container of infusing fluid and to the catheter, wherein said controller adjusts a speed of the pump to regulate the amount of fluid infused into the sac.

18. A system as in claim 15 wherein the controller further comprises a pressure target and said controller regulates the fluid infused into the sac based on a comparison of the threshold and the signal indicative of the fluid pressure.